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Mr. Rothman was asked to prepare this
article in the hope that librarians
throughout the country would see in the
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THE AFL-CIO COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAM

WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT WORKS

The major purpose of the AFL-CIO Community Services program - reflecting one of the basic objectives of the AFL-CIO as a whole - is to achieve a community which is more representative of the people and which is more responsive to the people's needs. The word more is significant because it underlines the fact that, by and large, the American community should be representative of the people and should be responsive to the people's needs. The Community Services program, therefore, is designed to encourage first-class citizenship and more than adequate health, welfare and recreation facilities and services.

The AFL-CIO Community Services program is also a reflection of the firm belief of the American labor movement in the process of integration as opposed to a policy of isolation. The active participation of AFL-CIO affiliates and trade union members in the affairs of their communities is the tangible expression of labor's consistent refusal to become a socially separatist movement. It is here where one finds representatives of labor, management, the professions, the clergy and citizens generally working together for the common good of the total community. It is in this voluntary association of free men and women from all walks of life and from all shades of political opinion and economic background that our flexible democratic society exposes its very heart and soul.

There is also a practical aspect to labor's relationship to the community. Organized labor learned long ago that it cannot solve its problems unless it works with other groups in the community to find solutions to the basic problems of all the people. This principle has influenced labor's relationship especially in its work with social welfare agencies.

Founding

The AFL-CIO Community Services Committee was created by constitutional provision at the first AFL-CIO Convention. It was charged with the work of stimulating active participation of unions and union members in community affairs and of developing sound relationships with social agencies. Early in its history, the Community Services Committee adopted a resolution embodying the following principles to guide it in its work.

- "1. The union member is first and foremost a citizen of his community.
2. The union member has a responsibility to his community. He must cooperate with his fellow citizens in making his community a good place in which to live, to work, to raise children. He must be concerned about the availability of adequate health, welfare and recreational services for the whole community.
3. Unions have a responsibility for the health and welfare of their members and their families which extends beyond the place of employment. This responsibility includes not only the emergency caused by strike, unemployment or disaster but extends to helping the member meet his day-to-day personal or family problems.
4. The community has a responsibility to its citizens. It must be prepared to meet those social needs which individuals or families cannot meet or meet adequately with their own resources.

5. Unions have elected to finance, support and participate in existing community social service agencies rather than to establish direct social services of their own. To the degree that the personnel and facilities of social agencies serve all the people, they serve the men and women of organized labor, and unions shall be encouraged to continue this policy.

6. Government has the basic responsibility for meeting the broad health and welfare needs of the people.

7. Voluntary or privately sponsored social agencies and facilities occupy an important position in meeting the social welfare needs of the community. Major responsibilities falling within the scope of voluntary social work are the fields of character formation, child guidance, family counseling and youth activities, as well as in the area of experimentation and pioneering research.

8. It is the responsibility of organized labor to cooperate with other community groups in improving the quantity and quality of social services while, at the same time, educating union members about available health and welfare services and how to use them.

9. Assistance in whatever form should be given on the basis of need, regardless of the cause of the need and without regard to race, color or national origin.

10. Prevention of social problems is preferred to the best treatment of social ills."

These principles synthesize organized labor's approach to social welfare. They suggest the road that labor will follow in reaching its objective of a better community for all.

The identification of the trade unionist with his community is within the American tradition as seen by De Tocqueville many years ago. It is largely in this identification that the future of American labor lies. The AFL-CIO Community Services program perceives that the union is more than a union, that it is also a community organization; that the union member is more than a union member, that he is also a citizen; that the union leader is more than a union leader, that he is also a community leader. The fact is that one can no more separate the Community Services program from the union than one can separate the union from the community.

It is through the Community Services program that the experiences and skills which the trade union has gained in organizing the unorganized for wages, hours and working conditions can be applied intelligently and responsibly in helping to organize the total community for more adequate health and welfare services for the entire community.

This means that the union has become increasingly concerned with problems not covered by the collective bargaining agreement, with the life of union men and women beyond the plant gates, with their homes, with their hospitals and their schools and their parks, with their roads and their playgrounds, and with the neighborhood where they live as well as with the place where they work. All this has become a union responsibility to be discharged through community channels - in concert with other groups of citizens.

Objectives

One of the major program objectives of the AFL-CIO Community Services work is to assist as many of its members as possible to assume their responsibilities to the community. Through the union counsellor training program, union members become familiar with the purpose and work of community health and welfare services and facilities. Counsellor training courses help union members to develop a wider and deeper understanding of social problems and of the resources which are available to deal with them.

A second objective of the AFL-CIO Community Services program is to promote the intelligent use of public and voluntary welfare agencies and the help-giving services they offer. The union counsellor, in performing his function as referral agent, is very frequently the link between the union member with a family or personal problem on one hand and the best source of community help on the other.

A third objective of the Community Services program is to encourage and equip the union member for service in community affairs. Board membership on health and welfare organizations affords the opportunity for citizen participation in policy-making and agency-planning; it strengthens community understanding. For itself, the AFL-CIO seeks no special consideration other than the opportunity to serve. To the degree that social agencies represent the total community, they represent the men and women of organized labor.

In addition to board membership, AFL-CIO members serve their communities in a number of ways. They are blood donors, volunteer drivers for the handicapped, leaders in the local scout troop or settlement house; they serve as readers to the blind, aids in hospitals, foster home parents, and civil defense workers; through their trades and crafts they often contribute their skills to many community programs.

A fourth objective of the Community Services program applies specifically to the support of voluntary agencies. Union leaders encourage their members to contribute through programs of federated fund raising to democratically operated, worthwhile community health, welfare and recreational agencies.

A fifth objective of the AFL-CIO Community Services program is to motivate union members to work with other community groups in realigning existing social services to meet needs as they arise, or to create new agencies and facilities to meet unmet needs.

Organizational Structure

How has the AFL-CIO organized itself to meet the objectives outlined above? The AFL-CIO Community Services Committee is advisory to the officers and Executive Council of the AFL-CIO on matters of broad policy affecting the Community Services program. Mr. Joseph A. Beirne, a vice-president of the AFL-CIO is chairman of the CSC. The operating arm of the Community Services program is the AFL-CIO Community Service Activities which is under the direction of Leo Perlis, and is located at 9 East 40th Street in New York City. Under Mr. Perlis' direction, ten staff men carry the various responsibilities of keeping the program dynamic and forward-looking. The staff functions include field service, program development, training, public relations, publications, and research. An important part of the work of the national CSA staff is to maintain a close relationship to a considerable number of national agencies. It works closely with many national voluntary agencies including

United Community Funds and Councils of America, the American National Red Cross, the USO, the National Social Welfare Assembly, the National Conference on Social Welfare, the Boy Scouts of America, the Girl Scouts of America, the Boys' Clubs of America, the Family Service Association of America, the National Association for Mental Health and many others, as well as a number of federal health and welfare agencies.

Activities

The program interests of CSA are broad. Primarily, CSA is interested in training union counsellors to serve as referral agents for their fellow-workers who have personal or family problems and who require the help of community social service agencies. Some 40,000 such referral agents have been trained as referral agents through participation in eight to ten two-hour weekly sessions. Counsellor training courses are sponsored and administered by local central labor bodies, but the classes are led by competent social work leaders who outline the services available in the functional area in which they operate. It is made clear to the participating union member that his job is to refer the person with the problem to the appropriate agency or to call a designated social worker who can help him make the proper referral.

The following topics are covered in a typical union counsellor training course:

1. Financial Assistance
2. Health Services
3. Family and Child Services
4. Workmen's and Unemployment Compensation
5. Social Security
6. Social Planning and Fund Raising
7. Recreation and Leisure Time
8. Special Services

Another basic concern of the CSA is bringing labor representatives onto the boards and committees of the community's social agencies. It is estimated that about 75,000 AFL-CIO members serve on the boards and committees of social agencies. In many communities, special training courses are offered to labor representatives who serve or who desire to serve on the boards and committees of social agencies.

In addition, CSA carries out programs and projects dealing with assistance to the unemployed union member, strike relief, surplus foods, family counselling, mental health, alcoholism and blood banks.

Early in 1958, the Community Service Activities selected six priority programs for special emphasis, each designed to meet an important need or establish a new service in the American communities.

Priority Programs

Unemployment relief headed the list. Community Service Activities staff and volunteers in cities and towns launched comprehensive programs of assistance to the unemployed union member and his family. Ways were sought and found to expedite and extend unemployment compensation benefits and public assistance, establish or expand surplus food distribution programs, and to set up special facilities to meet the immediate needs of the jobless.

Full use of the Salk polio vaccine was the second priority program. CSA's manpower, utilizing every principle of sound community organization, was responsible in many communities for reducing the cost of inoculations and stimulating mass inoculation programs.

Aware that the nation's hospitals are among the most important community institutions, Community Services used its program machinery in an effort to provide more adequate medical care to greater numbers of people through increased consumer and labor representation on hospital boards and committees.

Another priority was fluoridation. CSA spearheaded educational campaigns in communities where tooth decay is still allowed to go unchecked despite the proven effectiveness of water fluoridation.

The current critical shortage of trained social workers also became a priority concern of Community Services in 1958 with CSA promoting a program it devised and termed "One Percent for Scholarships." The plan calls for united funds and community chests to set aside one per cent of all funds raised in annual campaigns for scholarships in the social welfare field.

Health education generally was included in the 1958 priority list, to encourage better public understanding of health services.

At the outset of 1959, CSA turned its attention to three new areas of health and welfare: consumer counselling; retirement planning; and the creation of a national health fund.

The consumer education program, conducted in cooperation with Union Label and Service Trades Department, was the first major program of its kind ever launched on a mass scale across the country. Its chief aim is to protect the hard-earned dollar of the American worker.

It was evident from the start that labor and community groups welcomed this new priority program. Courses, clinics and conferences dealing in consumer information were set up rapidly in a score of major cities for union members and their spouses.

The following is a typical consumer information course outline:

Consumer Information Course

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| FIRST SESSION: | What is it
How it works
The importance of the union label |
| SECOND SESSION: | Buying the most for your money: General techniques |
| THIRD SESSION: | Buying the most for your money: Specific products and services
Part I. Appliances and cars
Part II. Home maintenance and appliance repairs |
| FOURTH SESSION: | Setting up and operating a family budget
Family meal planning |

- FIFTH SESSION: Borrowing money and credit - small loan companies, instalment contracts, credit unions, commercial banks
Education, particularly correspondence and private trade schools
- SIXTH SESSION: Legal assistance and protection for consumers -
Part I. Wage assignments, garnishments, liens
Part II. Laws governing such matters as weights and measures, insurance, food and beverages, sanitation, standards, etc.
- SEVENTH SESSION: Health
Paying the doctor and hospital bills
Quack medical remedies, vitamins and drug costs
- EIGHTH SESSION: Insurance - Personal (other than health), auto and home
- NINTH SESSION: Group buying - Insurance (other than health), cooperatives
- TENTH SESSION: Summary and evaluation
Review of course highlights
Application of new information
Significance of consumer counselling to individual union member and family and to the total community
The union label

Recognizing the need to develop more adequate services for the older and retired worker, Community Services selected pre and post-retirement planning as its second priority program for 1959. Looking to its successful five-year pilot project in Lansing, Michigan, where labor's Community Services program created a drop-in center for senior citizens and carried out a pre-retirement educational program as well as counselling for retired workers, CSA felt this plan of action could be followed by other communities.

This decision to concentrate on the problems of the older citizen was based on the AFL-CIO's belief that just as the seniority of a job-holder earns respect and fair treatment, the seniority in years of a human being deserves no less. The program was designed to meet, in part, two needs - the need that is felt so deeply by a large group of the aged for companionship and social belonging, and the need to assist retired workers and especially those in the middle years, to understand more fully what is involved in useful and purposeful retirement.

The following is a typical pre-retirement counselling course outline:

- FIRST SESSION: Orientation
1. Understanding the problems of older people
2. Workers' attitudes toward retirement
- SECOND SESSION: Financial Planning
1. Present income, and how it is spent
2. How much will it cost to live in retirement

THIRD SESSION: Financial Planning (continued)

3. Budgeting, economizing and consumer education
4. Determining whether or not to work after retirement
5. Job discrimination against older workers

FOURTH SESSION: Health

1. Physical changes in older people
2. Nutrition

FIFTH SESSION: Health (continued)

3. Mental Health
4. Health resources in the community

SIXTH SESSION: Living Arrangements

1. Where to live
2. With whom to live
3. Relationships with children and/or spouse after retirement

SEVENTH SESSION: Retirement Plan

1. Major problems in retirement
2. Community resources available for retired workers

EIGHTH SESSION: Retirement Plan (continued)

3. Community resources (continued)
4. The union and the retired member

As its third priority for 1959, CSA proposed the setting up of a voluntary federation of existing national voluntary health agencies for the purposes of raising funds once a year for all, allocating funds on the basis of relative needs and coordinating basic medical research.

The Staff

The success of the CSA program can be attributed in large measure to the 121 men and women who serve as local full-time CSA representatives in 83 cities across the country. Serving on the staffs of local funds, chests and community welfare councils, these men and women from the union ranks serve as a liaison between the local fund, chest or community welfare council and the local AFL-CIO central labor body, and they are responsible to both the community agency and to the central labor body. This unusual arrangement has enabled organized labor to assist its members to utilize the available social services more intelligently, to develop more effective labor participation in community programs, and to secure more adequate support from union members for the voluntary agencies. It is significant that today working people contribute about one-third of the total given to united funds and community chests across the country.

A primary function of the local CSA representative is to work on a day-to-day basis with people in need of medical and hospital care, family counselling, child care, legal aid, psychiatric service, housing, public assistance and so on. Their goal is to see that the community provides essential social services to all citizens who need them regardless of the cause of their need.

The national AFL-CIO-CSA staff has been aware, from the very inception of the program, that special skills and techniques were essential to its effective growth and development. The Community Services staffs of both the old AFL and the old CIO held annual staff training conferences for local staff members. After merger, this pattern was continued until in 1958 it became clear that annual staff training conferences no longer were feasible, primarily because of the number of staff people involved. It also became apparent that the many union members who worked in the Community Services program as union counsellors, as agency board members, as members of local union and central labor body community services committees - in short, the volunteers in the program wanted the knowledge, insights and inspiration that could be gained only by coming together once a year. An annual conference is still held but its objective is to inform and inspire the many union leaders and members who devote a large part of their time and energy to Community Services.

The training of full-time staff is still high on the agenda of the Community Services program. During January and February, 1958 and 1959, a series of seven regional conferences were held in cooperation with a number of universities including Cornell, Penn State, Michigan State, University of Michigan, University of California at Berkeley, University of California at Los Angeles, Roosevelt, Ohio State and Loyola of the South. In 1958, the training centered around subjects that would strengthen the leadership qualities of local CSA staff representatives. The 1959 training sessions were related to the 1959 priorities - consumer information, retirement planning and the national health fund.

Both in 1958 and 1959, a member of the CSA national staff met with university representatives to plan each program. Major responsibility for teaching rested with the universities. But the universities recognized that the CSA national staff had to be responsible for leadership in those areas involving policy and program implications of the training. In the main, the experience and learning gained from working with the universities proved to be satisfactory. It is anticipated that whenever feasible, university facilities and personnel will continue to be used in the CSA staff training program.

Publications

The AFL-CIO-CSA has published a number of pamphlets on Community Service subjects over the past four years. Most of the pamphlets relate specifically to the CSA program and its operation. Others cover broader areas such as "The Worker's Stake in Mental Health," which was published jointly by CSA and the National Association for Mental Health; "The Man Who Lived Again," which was published jointly by CSA and the American Correctional Association; and, "Family Counselling For the Union Member," which was published jointly by CSA and the Family Service Association of America. A complete list of all CSA publications is appended to this article. Individual copies of the above pamphlets are available from the AFL-CIO-CSA, 9 East 40th Street, New York 16, New York, without charge.

Service to All

Service to the individual - the very humblest of us - is the goal of the union and the community. This means service to the sick, to the poor, to the aged; service for personal and family problems not covered by the collective bargaining agreement; service to those in need, as a matter of right, regardless of the cause of that need; service to those in need as a result of strikes, tornadoes, unemployment, hurricanes; service not only to members of the AFL-CIO but to all citizens in need of help.

This means that labor, along with all citizens, must work for a better community for all, for more adequate resources, better facilities, more effective and more efficient services. This means community organization and social action for programs for the aging, for mental health, for blood banks and community health education, for disaster services and unemployment relief, for improved hospital services, and for equitable consumer and labor representation on community agency boards and committees.

This means training for citizenship and training for leadership. It means that labor must learn to articulate its needs more effectively. It means that labor must apply its knowledge and experiences and skills with wisdom and vision. It means that labor must provide more leadership for the community.

The AFL-CIO Community Services program is organized labor's channel for the achievement of these goals.

Julius Rothman, Staff Representative,
AFL-CIO Community Service Activities

PUBLICATIONS LIST

Five Objectives
AFL-CIO Community Services in the Local Central Labor Body
Community Services in your Local Union
Foundations of the AFL-CIO Community Services Program
Union Counselling
Policy for Survival
Family Counselling for the Union Member *
What Every Worker Should Know About Alcoholism
Disaster Service
AFL-CIO Community Service Through Scouting
The Man Who Lived Again
Surplus Foods
Social Hygiene
One Per Cent for Scholarships
Guidelines to Giving
Fluoridation for Your Community
Services for the Unemployed *

* These two pamphlets are available in the Spanish language.

Publications List (continued)

Safeguarding Labor's Dollar
Let's Have a National Health Fund
Labor and the Golden Years
Murray-Green Award
The Worker's Stake in Mental Health
Beyond the Picket Line

The above-mentioned pamphlets are available from:

AFL-CIO Community Service Activities
9 East 40th Street
New York 16, New York

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* * *

THREE'S A CHARM

Women have long had the reputation of being curious. Men are too, I am happy to say. At least, Gene W. Campbell, of the Communication Workers Local 3107, was curious enough to visit the Miami Public Library in order to find out what the library could do for his union's members and their families. For his visit led to participation by the library in an all-day Education Meeting of the Dade County Federation of Labor, two Labor Day displays by the D.C.F.L. in the Main Library, gifts of books and money to the library by local unions, participation in a Leadership Workshop in Discussion by five officers of the Communications Workers, and best of all, a rapport between representatives of the D.C.F.L. and the library.

It happened this way--about the time that I was made a member of the Joint Committee, a rumor was going around that the Miami Public Library staff was so indifferent to the working people who came to the library that the latter were hesitant about using the library's resources. To offset this rumor, representatives of the Education Committee of the Central Labor Union met with Dr. Frank B. Sessa, Director of the Miami Public Library, Richard Neuman, the Business Librarian, and myself. As a result, Mr. Neuman spoke to the D.C.F.L. Institute and distributed a list of recommended books. Nothing further happened.

Then, I was notified by John Cosgrove, Assistant Education Director of the AFL-CIO, that there was to be a State AFL Convention at the Beach. The State Chairman, Mr. John Roche, was most amiable when he was asked for permission to set up a display of books and brochures during the Convention. Mr. Neuman and I manned the booth for the duration of the Convention, and Tony Wilcox, President of Fire Fighters of local and state (and husband of a Miami Public Library staff member), helped distribute library and Joint Committee brochures and the AFL-CIO Education News and Views. The delegates looked at the books, recorded their titles and talked with us about the library's many resources. Members of COPE discussed the library's many activities and the books and programs that they had enjoyed most. But again--no further results.

The third time was a charm! I sent out letters to state AFL-CIO officers, and one morning after working all night, Mr. Campbell, a member of the Communication Workers' Education Committee, suddenly decided to see just what the Miami Public Library did have. Thus began a continuous and increasing amount of cooperation between Dade County unions and the Miami Public Library. Mr. Neuman spoke on library services at an all-day education meeting of D.C.F.L.A; I answered questions about the books and pamphlets we displayed and explained the many library resources and activities.

On the walls of the meeting room at the Communications Workers' headquarters were signs with the four bases of discussion printed in huge letters. These signs too, were the result of Gene Campbell's initiative. When the Leadership Workshop in Discussion was being planned at the request of several organizations wishing to know how to discuss controversial topics--especially integration--without anger, it had not entered our minds to ask union participation. However, when on one of Mr. Campbell's visits, this project was mentioned he asked that his union be invited to participate. As a result, five officials of CWA, Local 3107, including President Ray C. Mathis, attended and took an active part in every meeting. This participation was especially good in a town where unions are young and struggling. That the group, which also included representatives of the League of Women Voters, Association of University Women, The Crippled Children's Society, and the Lighthouse for the Blind was truly interested in discussing controversial topics was proved by the fact that of the fifteen topics suggested for use in teaching discussion techniques, the two receiving the most votes were Right to Work Laws and Labor's Right to Organize. Verbal praise was and is still being given by participants as the techniques are being put to practical use. Requests have been made not only for an advanced course but for a repeat of the first workshop for other unions. President Mathis, in a letter to Dr. Sessa wrote, "Some of the knowledge I gained from these classes has been ever so helpful to me in my capacity as President of my organization which represents approximately 2,450 members." Labor contacts are steadily increasing. This year Mr. Campbell and Miss Ruth Salliant of the Community Service Committee of the Dade County Federation of Labor furnished materials for two Labor Day displays at the Main Library. One stressed Union Label Week, the other the activities of various locals including their gifts to the library in honor of Labor Day: --Five books from CWA, Local 3107; one book each from the Hotel Employees' Union, Local 255, National Federation of Post Office Clerks, Local 172, Club and Restaurant Employees' and Bartenders' Union, Local 133, International Ladies' Garment Workers, and the Community Service Committee of Dade County Federation of Labor; a check for ten dollars from the Bus Drivers' Union and one for five dollars from the Municipal Employees' Union for the purchase of books.

This story of the Miami Public Library's service to labor is very short and slight in comparison to that of libraries in other cities. However, it promises to grow longer for officers of all Dade County unions will have a chance to see what the Miami Public Library can do for them when they meet on November 7 in the Main Library auditorium. A library tour has been planned, books will be displayed, brochures will be distributed including Memos and other material sent by John Cosgrove in behalf of the Joint Committee. And, Luckily we have Gene Campbell, his curiosity and his initiative!

Helga H. Eason, Head,
Community Relations Department
Miami Public Library

IN COMING ISSUES

The January issue of the Newsletter will tell of National Library Week: past performances (Des Moines' open house for Labor; Trenton's Labor and Literature Discussions) and coming projects (Painters' Union Secretary Perry Melton's ideas for library-labor cooperation.)

Washington Conference-goers of last summer will remember the appointment of Helga Eason to head a publicity committee. Writes Helga:

"Time's a fleeting and few ideas for National Library Week articles and pictures for the labor press have been received. Please send them to me at the Community Relations Department, Miami Public Library, 1 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami 32, Florida. Suggestions cannot be printed in the January Newsletter as scheduled unless they are received and worked on."

* * * * *

We are twice reminded of the need to preserve union records: The Spring, 1959, issue of the Labor Historian's Bulletin contains an article by Edward T. James of Radcliffe College, entitled, "Where are the A.F. of L. Papers"; and the AFL-CIO Convention meeting in San Francisco recommends to unions that they "make sure their original records and papers are made available to responsible researchers (and that they) cooperate with institutions such as historical societies, universities, and public, special and university libraries to assure the preservation of records and to arrange for their disposition when no longer current."

The Spring, 1960, issue of the Newsletter will include an article by Leone Eckert, Records Librarian of the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, on this same subject.

Committee Members

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The opinions expressed in this NEWSLETTER do not necessarily represent the policy of
views of the Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups of Adult Services
Division, ALA.